

**4/02/07 - Monday, April 2, 2007**

**CITY OF EAU CLAIRE**

**PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES**

**Meeting of April 2, 2007**

City Hall, Council Chambers

7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Messrs. Levandowski, Waedt, Davis, Larson, Kaiser, Vande Loo, FitzGerald, Kayser, and Ms. Kincaid

Staff Present: Messrs. Tufte, Reiter, Genskow, Ivory, and Ms. Noland

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Levandowski.

**1. TAX INCREMENT FINANCE DISTRICT (TID #8) - Downtown Area TID Amendment**

Ms. Noland presented the proposed amendment to the Downtown Area TID (#8) for findings that it conforms to the Comprehensive Plan and to recommend the amended plan to the City Council. The amendment proposes the use of \$1.3 million dollars of TID funds to be used for public street improvements on N. Barstow, Wisconsin, and Hobart Street. The plan also budgets \$900,000 in incentives to the developer contingent on a project development of over \$9.7 million in valuation. Ms. Noland stated that the TID still produces a positive cash flow over the life of the TID. No comments were received at the public hearing.

Mr. Vande Loo moved to approve the resolution. Mr. FitzGerald seconded and the motion carried.

**2. REZONING (Z-1381-07) - Amendment to Chapter 18, Catering Businesses**

Mr. Tufte presented a proposed amendment to the Zoning Code, which would allow consideration by conditional use permit of a catering business in a church in residential districts. He noted that a definition for catering businesses was also added. The standards are similar to those of a home occupation.

Rebecca Flynn, 6800 Lowes Creek Road, appeared in support. She stated that under her proposal there is no need for a sign on a church facility. No one appeared in opposition.

Mr. FitzGerald moved to recommend approval. Mr. Waedt seconded and the motion carried.

**3. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CZ-0702) - Garage, 3146 Riverview Drive**

Mr. David Cheney has submitted a request to allow a detached garage in excess of accessory use standards for his property at 3146 Riverview Drive. The property already has an attached double garage and a detached garage on site. This request is for a second detached garage in excess of 1,000 square feet. The Plan Commission can allow a second detached garage on lots in excess of 1 acre in size. This site is 1.9 acres. The proposed garage is 150' back from the street in a wooded area of the lot. The site is also within the 100-year flood plain and must meet flood plain standards. The Waterways and Parks Commission recommended approval. Mr. Cheney stated he will build the new garage to match the existing detached garage.

Mike Schuch, 3200 Riverview Drive, spoke in support, and no one appeared in opposition.

Mr. FitzGerald moved to approve the request with the conditions attached in the staff report and added two more conditions that the garage be limited to 1,500 square feet in area and that it be located 150 feet from the front property line. Mr. Kaiser seconded and the motion carried.

**4. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CZ-0703) - One-family Dwelling in R-4 District**

Grace Helms, 1711 Bellinger Street, has submitted a request to allow an addition to an existing single-family home in a R-4 district at 1711 Bellinger Street. The house is in a neighborhood of existing single-family residents. The addition will be to add a second floor to the rear for new bedrooms for her family. The building is nonconforming due to its side yard setback and the cost of the project will need to be below 50% of the assessed value. She estimated the cost of the addition to be \$11,000.

No one appeared in opposition.

Mr. FitzGerald moved to approve the request. Mr. Vande Loo seconded and the motion carried.

**5. SITE PLAN (SP-0706) - Rooming House, 913-915 Water Street**

This item was tabled by the Plan Commission to allow for snow melt to better see the surface parking in the area. During that time, the applicant has secured an offer to purchase the property to the west of his duplex and has proposed expansion of the parking lot to the west at 919 Water Street. An easement would be provided to allow the parking to be used by the residents of the duplex. This results in the existing parking on the duplex lot not having to be changed to provide the required parking for the proposed use of this duplex as two rooming houses with 5 persons each. The revised site plan adds 4 parking stalls on the property to the west. Three of these stalls would be available for use by the residents of the proposed rooming house, which results in 9 stalls for this use.

Matt McHugh, applicant, appeared in support. He stated that he has met with the neighborhood. There is currently no parking in the

back area of 919 Water Street. His effort to pave the back areas will improve this block and the parking situation. He showed pictures of the easement/alley-way and the parking and conditions of the unimproved surfaces. 919 Water Street is a 3-bedroom unit and he has no plans to expand it at this time.

Ms. Kincaid moved to approve the site plan, explaining that the City will have better control of occupancy as a rooming house and that this will improve the parking situation on this block. Her motion included the conditions listed in the staff report and she added an eighth condition requiring two trees be planted in the rear yard of 913/915 and one tree in the rear yard of 919 Water Street. Mr. Vande Loo seconded and the motion carried.

6. **SITE PLAN (SP-0709) - Duplex, 2311 Moholt Drive**

Mike Schuch presented a site plan for a proposed duplex at 2311 Moholt Drive. The floor plan and elevation show garages, front windows and doors.

Mr. Vande Loo moved to approve the site plan. Mr. FitzGerald seconded and the motion carried.

7. **DISCUSSION**

**A. Message Center Signs**

Mr. Ivory presented an update on the issue of electronic message center signs from February 5, 2007. Staff sent letters to the Chamber, business associations, sign companies, and interested parties. Six responses were received, which were shared with the commission. Mr. Ivory also listed several Wisconsin cities which have ordinances which control/limit electronic message signs. He also noted that an inventory of existing signs in the community had been completed and noted that 48% were installed within the last year, indicating that they are becoming more popular with businesses.

Mr. Larson urged the commission to take action quickly to limit these signs to avoid visual pollution of commercial streets. Most members commented that they are unsure of what community standards are appropriate for Eau Claire. Mr. FitzGerald commented that although they could be reviewed as a conditional use as in most communities, he preferred that 90% could be approved by staff with appropriate standards and felt most businesses would be receptive to standards. Mr. Kaiser stated that he's not able to support limits at this time without enough experience and that signs which exceed the standards could apply for a conditional use permit.

The commission directed staff to prepare an ordinance to schedule public hearings in order to collect public comment on the issue. They recommended that standard 3, concerning color be dropped from the list. They did prefer only letters and numbers be permitted on signs and not graphics. Staff will return with a proposed ordinance for public comment.

**B. Eastside Hill Neighborhood Down-zoning**

Mr. Tufte reported that the Eastside Hill Neighborhood has requested that the City begin a down zoning study for areas within the neighborhood as recommended by their plan. He stated that staff would start with the area adjacent to the downtown, which is currently R-4, and proceed to collect information on lot sizes and residences to see the affect of a down-zoning. This process will be similar to that used in other neighborhoods. The commission directed staff to proceed.

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of March 19, 2007, were approved.

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Fred Waedt

Secretary